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2008-09

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## Montana Indian Education Association

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SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 9

2-4-2009

DATE

BILL NO.

SB 691

SB 70

February 4, 2009

Senate Education and Cultural Resources Committee – SB 70

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Terry Kendrick and I am here on behalf of the Montana Indian Education Association. The Montana Indian Education Association has over 400 members including teachers, tribal leaders, school board members, students, and state education leaders. MIEA urges your support of Senate bill 70 to ensure the educational success of at-risk students, to close the educational achievement gap, and to continue the important work of Indian Education for All.

Research from the American Youth Policy Forum shows educational attainment is one of the surest ways to alleviate poverty. People with a high school diploma earn about \$10,000 more a year than high school dropouts. People with a bachelor's degree earn about three times more than those who dropout of high school. In 2001, only 55% of young adult dropouts were employed compared with nearly three fourths of high school graduates.

As a community, state and nation we fail when we let students fall through the cracks. We support the 3% increase in funding to address the needs of at-risk students.

MIEA also supports the 3% increase in achievement gap funding. In 2003, American Indian students were an average of 3 years behind their White peers in Reading and Math in Montana. Over the past 5 years, American Indians represent only 11.5% of the total 7-8<sup>th</sup> grade school enrollment, but accounted for 72% of the dropouts and while American Indian students are 10% of the total high school enrollment, they account for a quarter of the dropout rate.

An important piece of Montana's educational system outlined in our state's Constitution is Indian Education for All. Part of the definition of a quality education is to ensure that all Montana's students learn about the important heritage and contributions of Native people. We certainly support the 3% increase but we would like to see an increase from the amount budgeted of \$20.00 ANB to \$40.00 per ANB. Montana has been a national leader in Indian Education for All. The strides we've made in the past few years are remarkable but now is not the time to go backwards. Please vote in favor of SB 70.

Thank you.

# 2007-08 Criterion Referenced Test (CRT)

By reservation and urban districts

Average proficiency rates of American Indians / Grades 3-8 & 10 combined

	Reading	Math
Lame Deer (Lame Deer)	35	19
Crow (Pryor/Plenty Coups, Lodge Grass, Wyola, Hardin)	37	20
Fort Peck (Poplar, Brockton, Wolf Point, Frazer, Frontier)	49	27
Blackfeet (Browning, Heart Butte)	46	19
Fort Belknap (Harlem, Hays-Lodge Pole)	51	26
Rocky Boy (Box Elder, Rocky Boy)	67	35
Flathead (Arlee, Ronan, St. I., Polson, Dixon, Hot Springs, Charlo)	67	41
Havre	60	43
Bozeman	57	43
Missoula	67	43
Great Falls	70	51
Billings	67	44
Helena	71	38
Butte	67	47
American Indian student state average	58	36
White student state average	84	67





# 2007-08 CRT Science

Percent Proficient & Advanced - All Grades Combined

